

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-12 are pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 12 being independent claims, Claim 8 being canceled, and Claim 12 being new.

The last Office Action has been carefully considered.

Claims 1-3, 5-6, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hofmann et al. (WO 03/097299).

Claims 4, 7, and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hofmann.

It is gratefully acknowledged that Claim 8 has allowable subject matter, is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 5-7, and 10-11 are amended. No new subject matter is presented.


Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), Claim 1 is amended to include all limitations of Claim 8, which has allowable subject matter and depends directly upon Claim 1. Amended Claim 1 is deemed allowable.

Regarding new Claim 12, no known art, including Hofmann, anticipates or renders Claim 12 obvious.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims, namely, Claims 1-7 and 9-12, are in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place this case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendments or corrections be carried out by Examiner's Amendment, and the case be passed to issue. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance; he is invited to telephone the undersigned (at 631-549-4700).

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Striker
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 27233